

## **ADEPT PRESIDENT'S AWARDS 2019 Category 2: Deploying digital innovation and technology**

### **HIGHLY COMMENDED**

#### **Nottinghamshire County Council**

##### **Summary**

The £6.8m Digital Growth Programme, part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), with public and private partners has delivered over 31,000 hours of business support, allowing over 1,300 businesses to introduce innovative digital technologies into their operations, improving competitiveness and productivity, achieving business growth, driving efficiencies and creating high skilled, high paid jobs.

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##### **Digital Growth Programme – an overview (500 words)**

Businesses with low digital capability could unlock an additional £85bn turnover for the UK economy if they were to develop a higher digital capability. 40% of SMEs in the East Midlands currently lack all the basic digital skills - a significant barrier to growth<sup>1</sup>.

Reflecting the Government's ambition to build a world-leading digital economy ("Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the Future" 2017), Nottinghamshire County Council is implementing its own strategies and initiatives to ensure that its business community is equipped with the appropriate digital skills, knowledge and confidence required to develop and grow, increase productivity and generate high skilled, high paid jobs.

Nottinghamshire County Council has been at the forefront of driving the D2N2 LEP's response and successfully secured over £6.8m of private, public and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), funding to deliver an innovative Digital Growth Programme (DGP). On behalf of its partners (comprising Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire County Councils, Nottingham and Derby City Councils, East Midlands Chamber and Rushcliffe Borough Council), the Council in its role of accountable body, has successfully managed this complex partnership, ensuring that desired outcomes have benefited both our partners and crucially, our businesses. The partnership has close links with the two County-based Superfast Broadband programmes, facilitating businesses to maximise enhanced broadband opportunities.

DGP has immersed over 1,300 businesses in 48 awareness raising seminars and 340 action planning workshops to develop specialist competency in digital technology and help them achieve their growth aspirations. These interactive events focused on contemporary themes such as cloud computing and cyber resilience, email marketing, customer relationship management (CRM) systems and Big Data, mobile marketing and productivity, Search Engine Optimisation, virtual reality, video marketing and live streaming, artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, and Google analytics.

Businesses have benefited from over 31,000 hours of support, equating to over £3.2m worth of highly specialist advice. The Programme complemented this with £1.8m grant funding to businesses wanting to maximise their existing technology and implement new transformative systems and software. Co-

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<sup>1</sup> UK Business and Charity Digital Index 2018, Lloyds Bank, <https://resources.lloydsbank.com/businessdigitalindex/>

investment from 180 businesses across the D2N2 LEP region enabled over £4.5m worth of private investment in new digital technologies.

Examples of digital investment include new IT infrastructure, through servers, online storage, intelligence management and security backup; custom-built productivity apps; mobile responsive ecommerce websites; bespoke data management systems; installation of enterprise resource planning business systems for use in manufacturing and bespoke virtual smart card databases in key sector businesses.

Following on from the success of DGP, the partners have integrated DGP into the D2N2 Growth Hub operation, giving the programme a higher profile and boosting the Growth Hub's impact and scope. This has culminated in the new partnership securing a £12.2m funding extension, extending activity to March 2022.

We believe that through continued partnership working and the successful digital innovation and imaginative use of new technologies, local businesses will continue to benefit substantially, supporting the wider local economy through business growth and competitiveness, increased productivity and the creation of new jobs.

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#### **Additional Information**

Below is a Vimeo video link that showcases the successes of the Digital Growth Programme including hearing from business beneficiaries.

<https://vimeo.com/purposemedia/review/336109011/b6df548e4d>

Attached to the accompanying email are three photos covering the following:

- Photo 1 – D2N2 DGP Conference & Expo– over 300 delegates attended
- Photo 2 – DGP Workshop scheme – 340 workshops delivered
- Photo 3 – Kurio 3D Compression Ltd – DGP grant recipient to support the development of 3D scanning technology / pattern making software to enable manufacture of bespoke compression garments for the elite sports market in UK / overseas.



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It fits me perfectly of course but the  
best benefit is the reduction in  
muscle soreness after a long ride.

**Lydia Tennant**  
Professional Cyclist